



# Illinois 4-H Safe

## ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Illinois 4-H Safe notes are intended primarily for 4-H volunteers and staff

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## FOOD SAFETY AT 4-H CLUB MEETINGS OR EVENTS

The CDC estimates that 48 million people get sick, 128,000 are hospitalized, and 3,000 die from food-borne diseases each year in the United States.

Because food is often prepared for serving at 4-H club meetings and events, the potential exists for transmission of food poisoning. By establishing and following proper food handling and preparation practices the risks for causing food poisoning can be significantly reduced or eliminated.

### Food Safety Tips

- Always begin your food preparation activities by washing your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Wash counter tops, cutting boards, and utensils with hot soapy water prior to starting food preparation activities. Wash can tops before opening.
- Rinse fresh fruits and vegetables under running water before slicing, cutting, or processing.
- After handling and preparing raw meat, wash the preparation surface and your hands with soap and warm water.
- Use separate cutting boards and plates for raw meat, poultry, and seafood.
- Thaw frozen food safely in the refrigerator, in cold water, or in the microwave. Never thaw foods on the counter.
- Follow food recipes precisely and completely, including proper cooking times.
- Keep food either hot (at 140 °F or higher) or cold (at 41°F or lower). Note: the temperature of a refrigerator should be 40°F or less, and a freezer should be 0°F or below.
- If hot or cold food is being transported to the meeting site, it should be carried in either a cooler with ice if it is cold food or an insulated container if it is hot food.
- Refrigerate perishable food within 2 hours.
- Discard food that is not fresh and do not use canned goods that are dented, leaking, bulging, or rusted.
- Check with the CDC or local Health Department for more information.



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